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From the Office of the Director of Health

National Infant Immunization Week

The Springfield-Greene County Health Department celebrates National Infant Immunization Week April 19 – 26th in an effort to highlight the importance of protecting infants from vaccine-preventable diseases and recognize the achievements of vaccination programs in promoting healthy communities.

“Vaccines are among the most successful and cost-effective methods available for preventing disease and death,” says immunization coordinator Leslie Davis, RN. “Vaccines not only protect individuals from developing potentially serious diseases, they also help protect entire communities by preventing and reducing the spread of infectious agents.”

Each day, nearly 12,000 babies are born in the United States. These infants are especially vulnerable to infectious diseases, which is why it is critical to immunize them against 14 vaccine-preventable diseases before they turn 2 years old.

“As guardians of the future,” adds Davis, “we all have a stake in children’s health. No child should ever have to suffer or die from a vaccine-preventable disease. One of the most important things we can do to protect our children’s health is to be sure they are vaccinated on time – every time.”

A special vaccination clinic will be held for infants and children on Thursday, April 24, from 1:00 to 4:00 pm at the health department’s Westside Public Health Center, located at 660 South Scenic. For more information call 417-874-1220.

Last year health department staff vaccinated 7,647 children against vaccine-preventable diseases.

For more information on infant and childhood immunizations, visit the health department Web site at <http://health.springfieldmo.gov> or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov/vaccines/.

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